

DATE

Shawanda M. Woods-Smith, PsyD  
110 Coach Road  
Ball, Louisiana 71405

Re: **Louisiana Board of Ethics**  
**Docket No. 2021-710**

Dear Ms. Woods-Smith,

The Louisiana Board of Ethics, at its meeting on October 8, 2021, considered your request for an advisory opinion as to whether the Code of Governmental Ethics ("Code") would prohibit you from providing private psychology services.

#### **FACTS PROVIDED**

You are currently employed by the Louisiana Department of Health ("LDH"), Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, as the Director of Psychology Services at Pinecrest Supports Services Center ("Pinecrest") in Pineville. Your duties include the supervision of unlicensed Doctoral Level Psychology Postdoctoral Fellows and Masters Level Trained Associates to a Psychiatrist. In your role, you provide assessment, therapy, and support to individuals residing in Pinecrest, which is a state intermediate care facility. Individuals supported at Pinecrest must have a diagnosis of intellectual and/or developmental disability, in addition to medical, behavioral, and psychiatric conditions.

You intend to open a private psychology practice under the name CenterPoint Therapy Group, with the intent to offer outpatient therapy and psychological assessments in the form of individual and group sessions and psychoeducational workshops. Your areas of focus would include family conflict, work stress, anxiety, depression, women's issues, health concerns, cultural awareness, and emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. Your practice would not be a Medicaid provider. Additionally, you would not be working with individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

#### **LAW**

La. R.S. 42:1111C(1)(a): No public servant shall receive any thing of economic value for any service, the subject matter of which is devoted substantially to the responsibilities, programs, or operations of the agency of the public servant and in which the public servant has participated.

## CONCLUSION

The Board concluded, and instructed me to inform you, that Section 1111C(1)(a) will not prohibit you from operating a private psychology practice, since you will not be providing private services related to individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who receive services through the LDH, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities at Pinecrest.

This advisory opinion is based solely on the facts as set forth herein. Changes to the facts as presented may result in a different application of the provisions of the Code of Governmental Ethics. Please note that the Board issues no opinion as to past conduct and that the Board's expressed opinion is limited to an examination of the Code of Governmental Ethics, the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act, the Lobbyist Disclosure Acts, and the conflict of interest provisions in the gaming laws.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (800)842-6630 or (225)219-5600.

Sincerely,

**LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS**

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David M. Bordelon  
For the Board

**DISCLAIMER**  
This is a draft opinion and it is **NOT** an opinion of the Louisiana Board of Ethics.  
No party may rely on the facts or conclusions. The analysis and conclusions herein are provided for discussion purposes only, and are subject to change or revision at the meeting of the Board of Ethics at which this matter is considered.